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ABSTRACT

This workbook provides an instrument to objectively analyze a school's current climate with regard to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) people and the steps needed to move that school toward a more inclusive environment. It provides a detailed assessment survey (to be completed by key school stakeholders), descriptive data, and direct action organizing tools to support school communities seeking to understand and enhance the environment for LGBT and all youth. The survey provides a complete array of evaluative statements in areas including school policy, curricular inclusion, faculty training, gay-straight alliances, schoolwide programming, and adult attitudes toward LGBT people. It assesses school climate regarding LGBT issues along a four-point continuum (hostile, resistant, open, and inclusive schools). Fictionalized composites of the four types of schools are included. The descriptive data help community members understand what their survey scores mean and what the four-point continuum looks like. The workbook includes a plan for creating issue campaigns that turn problems into tangible solutions for school communities. Taken together, the components represent a model that supports the development of school communities into healthier places for all students. (SM)



THE GLSEN WORKBOOK

**A Developmental Model for Assessing, Describing and Improving Schools
for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) People**

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The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) envisions a future in which every child learns to respect and accept all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. Founded upon this vision in 1995, GLSEN has grown to be the leading national organization working to end anti-gay bias in K-12 schools. GLSEN believes that the key to ending anti-gay prejudice and hate-motivated violence is education. It's for this reason that GLSEN brings together students, educators, families and other community members—of any sexual orientation or gender identity—to reform America's educational system. GLSEN's work is focused on three key areas—community organizing, public policy, and educational materials development. In addition to its four regional offices and public policy office in Washington, D.C. GLSEN carries out its mission through its grassroots network of over 90 chapters in more than 40 states across the country. For more information, contact GLSEN at:

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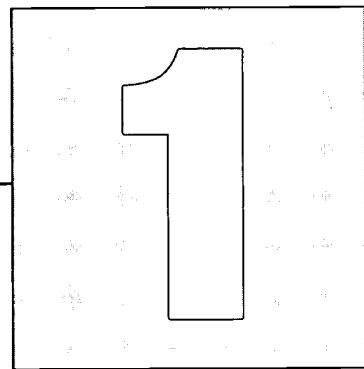
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Introduction

About the GLSEN Workbook

- ***Too many of our schools are hostile climates for LGBT youth.***
- ***We must work toward safe and affirming schools for all.***
- ***More inclusive policy and practice would improve the climate for LGBT and all students.***

These phrases probably sound familiar. They are emblematic of the calls to action employed by activists throughout the past decade to draw attention to the need for more equitable school environments for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students and staff. But what do they actually mean? Hostile climate. Safe schools. Inclusive Practice. In our efforts to raise awareness about the challenges facing LGBT youth, we have created clichés that are meaningless to some and widely interpreted by others. Some members of school communities feel alienated by these terms. Some can't envision what they signify or how to translate them into concrete change. What does a hostile climate feel like? How can I make my school safer for LGBT youth? What would more inclusive practice look like in my classroom?

The link between elusive appeals and practical improvements in the lives of real people lies in our ability to objectively describe the current state of a given school and the steps needed to move that school toward a desired end state. The GLSEN Workbook provides an instrument that does just that. Using a detailed assessment survey, descriptive data, and direct action organizing tools, the GLSEN Workbook supports school communities that seek to understand and enhance the environment for LGBT and all youth.

- **ASSESSMENT SURVEY**

The GLSEN Workbook includes a detailed questionnaire with 26 items that help school members to assess a wide array of practices. The survey, literally ranging from A to Z, provides a complete alphabet of evaluative statements in areas including school policy, curricular inclusion, faculty training, gay-straight alliances, school-wide programming, and adult attitudes toward LGBT people.

- **4-POINT CONTINUUM**

The assessment survey measures school climate with regard to LGBT issues along a four-point continuum that allows school members to see their practice as fluid rather than fixed. The continuum includes four school designations: (1) The Hostile School; (2) The Resistant School; (3) The Open School; and (4) The Inclusive School. Community members are challenged to determine where along the continuum their schools lie with regard to a variety of issues, and to envision ways of advancing along the scale.

- **DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION**

The GLSEN Workbook provides in-depth descriptive data that helps community members to understand what their survey scores mean and what hostile, resistant, open and inclusive school environments look like. This explanatory information is organized under three inclusive categories:

Policy explores the school's official stance with regard to harassment and discrimination, diversity, curriculum, student clubs, and staffing;

Programming takes a look at curricular and extracurricular practices including classroom lessons, library collections, staff development, athletic programs, student clubs, health/guidance programs, college/career counseling, social functions, and family education;

Practice examines the overall attitudes and behaviors that characterize the school, such as use of anti-gay language, responses to anti-gay harassment, visibility and comfort level of LGBT people, and relationship to LGBT organizations and service agencies external to the school community.

In addition to point by point discussions in each of the above areas, fictionalized composites of each of the four school types are included that translate the information into narrative accounts. These snapshots portray realistic scenarios and move community members closer to envisioning the school experiences of LGBT people in different settings.

- **TAKING ACTION**

The end goal of a thorough assessment process is to transform insight into action. The GLSEN Workbook therefore includes a plan for creating issue campaigns that turn problems into tangible solutions for school communities. Taken from Midwest Academy, a leader in the field of grassroots and direct action organizing, this section includes an approach to choosing winnable issues and developing effective strategic plans. Armed with the means to achieve concrete change, community members will be able to improve the school climate for LGBT and all people.

- **DEVELOPMENTAL MODEL**

Taken together, the components described above represent a model that supports the development of school communities into healthier places for all students. This guide is just what the title implies—a workbook, much like the ones used in schools every day to deepen understanding and build skills. It is not a report card meant to mark or indict a community, but rather a tool for increasing reflective practice and encouraging growth. The developmental approach reflected in the GLSEN Workbook has a number of benefits:

It is Descriptive: The information provided is descriptive and specific. It avoids generalizations and sweeping statements, thereby helping school members to gain a clear picture of the school's present state and to envision an improved situation.

It is not Absolute: The scores, categories and descriptions in the GLSEN Workbook are not fixed or absolute. School members may see themselves reflected in any number of places along the continuum from “hostile” to “inclusive,” and are encouraged to view their practice as changeable and movable.

It is Visual: By its nature, a developmental continuum helps people to see where they stand with regard to key principles and in relation to others. This type of graphic representation helps to define the stages one must go through or the steps that must be taken to reach a desired position on the scale.

It Creates Conflict: Locating oneself along a continuum often causes tension between self-perception and reality. When people learn that they may not be at the level they believed themselves to be, the resulting dissonance is frequently the impetus for change.

It Inspires Growth: The developmental model is based upon the principle that all schools are ever-evolving organizations, and that change is healthy. The GLSEN Workbook is not a means by which to judge a school’s current condition, but an instrument by which to develop an eye toward future growth and movement.

Theory on change and bias reduction has taught us that it is in the knowing of oneself that more plural understanding is possible. It is hoped that the GLSEN Workbook will foster a process of institutional self-learning that will be a critical step on the path to more inclusive environments for LGBT and all people.

How to Use the GLSEN Workbook

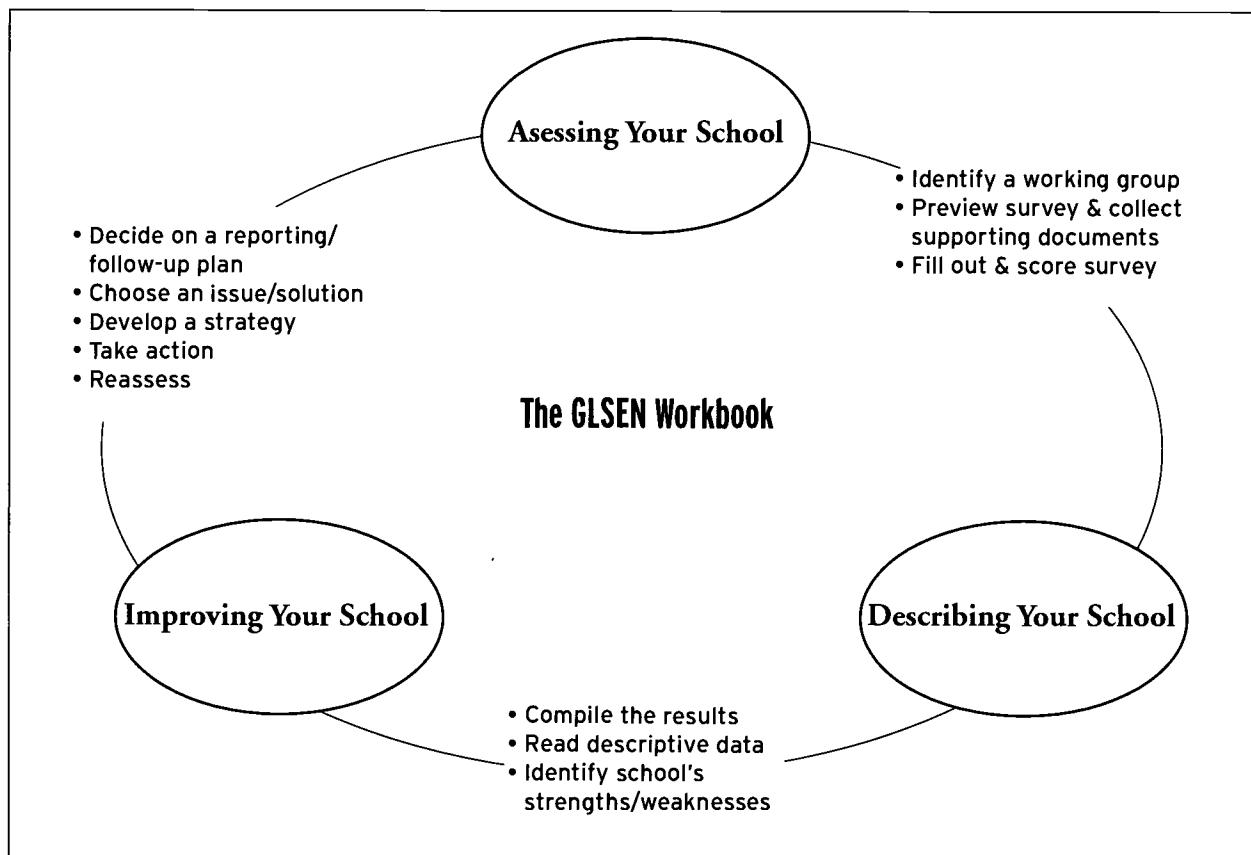
The GLSEN Workbook is a tool for measuring, describing, and improving an individual school's climate with regard to LGBT people and issues. It is built upon a detailed assessment survey that presupposes the user has a comprehensive understanding of the school's policies, programming and practices. Ideally, the survey should be completed by a small group of students, staff, family members and/or others who are part of the school community. In some instances, community organizations external to the school may find it beneficial to conduct this in-depth assessment. In those cases, groups should plan to identify and interview individuals who can shed light on the intricacies of a particular school before carrying out the following steps.

COMPLETING THE ASSESSMENT SURVEY

- 1. IDENTIFY A GROUP:** Identify a small group of individuals to jointly complete the assessment process. Your group should represent a variety of constituencies and perspectives. Consider inviting students, administrators, family members, and faculty/staff to participate. Look to the school's gay-straight alliance, diversity club, multicultural committee and other groups focused on equity issues for participants.
- 2. PREVIEW THE SURVEY:** Meet once before completing the assessment survey to preview it and identify information that can be collected to support the process. The group may want to gather school policy statements, curriculum guidelines, and other documents that will help to accurately answer survey items. Divide responsibility for collecting relevant information amongst the group members.
- 3. FILL OUT THE SURVEY:** Plan for at least a two-hour meeting to collaboratively complete the assessment survey on pages 10-15. A liberal block of time will allow for discussion of items for which there is not group consensus. A question about the existence of certain policies will be easily answered, but an assessment of staff attitudes toward LGBT issues may warrant reflective discourse before some agreement is reached. View group process as a valuable part of the procedure—you will learn as much from the dialogue as you will by scoring your answers on the worksheet afterwards.
- 4. SCORE THE ITEMS:** When scoring each survey item, bear in mind that the answers are meant to reflect a continuum, not absolutes. This means that you may see aspects of your school embodied in different responses to the same question, or your school may fit between two answers. As a group, try to select the answer that, in each case, most closely corresponds to the point along the continuum at which you see your school. You may use half scores (1.5, 2.5, etc.) if this helps you to represent your school most accurately.

5. COMPILE THE RESULTS: When you have completed the assessment, transfer the results onto the Scoring Guide on page 16. Make sure to enter a score from 1-4 for each of the 26 survey items and a subtotal for each of the four sections (Policy, Curricular Programming, Extracurricular Programming, and Practice). Use the Section Scoring guidelines to determine where your school stands along the continuum from hostile to inclusive for each section and for the school as a whole. The Section Descriptions will help you to pinpoint the specific areas in which your school needs to improve.

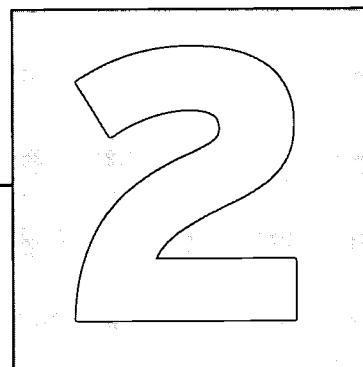
6. READ THE DESCRIPTIVE DATA: Once you have scored the survey, consult the descriptive information on pages 18-35 to develop a fuller understanding of what the results mean. Terms such as “hostile school” or “inclusive policy” are well-worn phrases that may have little meaning for some individuals and imply different ideas to various members of the community. Detailed descriptions broken down by area (policy, programming, practice) and school type (hostile, resistant, open, inclusive) are provided as well as fictional composites of each of the four school types. Use the information in this section as you would a reference guide, concentrating on the sections that shed light on your survey results. It may be too dense and encyclopedic to absorb all at once, but the information will help you to gain a concrete and practical understanding of your school that will facilitate the reporting and follow-up procedures in which you choose to engage.



REPORTING SURVEY RESULTS AND FOLLOW-UP

The chief purpose for carrying out this assessment is to raise awareness and work toward concrete improvements in school climate. Focus on one or more of the following suggestions in order to move your school along the continuum toward inclusive practices. Detailed information about using survey results to create issue campaigns and participate in direct action organizing is provided on pages 38-46.

1. Arrange for a face-to-face meeting with a principal decision maker (superintendent, principal, school board president, staff development coordinator, etc.) to discuss the survey results and make recommendations for concrete changes/actions.
2. Present survey results to the school gay-straight alliance, diversity club, multicultural committee, and/or other groups that focus on equity issues. Encourage these groups to include specific action items in their goals and work plans.
3. Present survey results at a faculty meeting, PTA meeting, union meeting, and/or student assembly to inform community members and motivate them to get involved in diversity work. Make connections between survey results and your school's mission or core beliefs.
4. Publish survey results in the school newspaper in order to raise awareness and call community members to action. Include information about how to get involved with your group or committee.
5. Analyze the school's staff development or strategic plan and existing policies (non-discrimination, anti-harassment, multicultural/diversity, staffing, etc.). Report inconsistencies between these documents and the day-to-day reality at your school as evidenced by the survey results. (Focus on areas such as supporting at-risk youth, promoting school safety, addressing the needs of a diverse student body, etc.)
6. Use survey results to advocate for a staff training that focuses on improving one of the areas in which the school scored poorly. Work with local community organizations, including your local GLSEN chapter, to develop trainings that address your school's specific needs.
7. Report survey results at local meetings of social justice and other community organizations. Target youth, parent/family, straight ally, civil/human rights, religious and other communities. Encourage members to be part of a coalition effort to address LGBT youth and education issues.
8. Turn survey results into statistics and message points that can be used to inform local media and encourage them to report on issues of importance to LGBT youth.
9. Use survey highlights to support grant applications and fundraising letters that can bring money to local organizations for school improvement efforts.
10. Share survey results with other local schools and encourage them to conduct their own assessments. Compile individual assessments into a district-wide report on the school climate around LGBT issues.
11. Reassess your school each year to mark progress and reprioritize goals and action plans.
12. Use survey results to build an issue campaign that will result in real improvements in the lives of community members. See pages 38-46 for detailed information and instructions on *Choosing an Issue and Developing a Strategy* from Midwest Academy.



Assessing Your School

Use the Assessment Survey and Scoring Guide on pages 10-16 to learn about your school's climate with regard to LGBT issues in the areas of policy, programming and practice. See page 5 for instructions on how to conduct the assessment.

From A-Z: Schools and LGBT Issues: An Assessment Survey

For each item, choose the phrase that best completes the statement for your school. Write the corresponding number on the line to the left of each item. When scoring each survey item, bear in mind that the answers are meant to reflect a continuum, not absolutes. This means that you may see aspects of your school embodied in different responses to the same question, or your school may fit between two answers. Try to select the answer that, in each case, most closely corresponds to the point along the continuum at which you see your school. You may use half scores (1.5, 2.5, etc.) if this helps you to represent your school most accurately.

A. THE SCHOOL'S NON-DISCRIMINATION AND ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICIES

1. do not include sexual orientation or gender identity.
2. include sexual orientation, but with no reporting or disciplinary procedures in place.
3. include sexual orientation and gender identity, are visibly posted, and reporting/disciplinary procedures are in place.
4. include sexual orientation and gender identity, are visibly posted and discussed, and both reporting/ disciplinary procedures and preventative education are in place.

B. A MULTICULTURAL/DIVERSITY STATEMENT OR POLICY

1. does not exist and, in any case, would not include sexual orientation or gender identity.
2. exists and may include sexual orientation, but school programming does not reflect this inclusion.
3. exists and includes sexual orientation and gender identity, with some inclusive programming taking place.
4. exists and includes sexual orientation and gender identity with regular inclusive programming in place.

C. CURRICULAR INCLUSION OF LGBT THEMES

1. is barred by a policy that prohibits positive inclusion of LGBT issues.
2. is unofficially considered inappropriate and does not occur.
3. is not disallowed, but permission from parents/supervisors may be required due to the "sensitive" or "controversial" nature of the subject.
4. is encouraged and mandated with no parent notification requirements.

D. THE FORMATION OF GAY-STRAIGHT ALLIANCES (GSAS) AND OTHER LGBT-THEMED STUDENT CLUBS

1. is strongly discouraged.
2. is neither supported nor discouraged in any school statement or policy.
3. is unofficially accepted with no formal statement of support.
4. is formally supported in a statement that regards such clubs as a necessary component of an inclusive extracurricular atmosphere.

E. LGBT STAFF MEMBERS

1. are not formally acknowledged and receive no formal protections or benefits.
2. are protected by an employment non-discrimination policy, but do not receive domestic partnership benefits.
3. are included in non-discrimination policies, receive domestic partnership benefits and can be open and honest to peers with few repercussions.
4. receive domestic partnership benefits, are included in outreach/hiring practices, and benefit from an official statement protecting and affirming their right to be open and honest to colleagues and students.

F. WITH REGARD TO LGBT CURRICULAR INCLUSION, THE ADULT COMMUNITY

1. is strongly opposed and believes that exposure to LGBT people/issues poses a danger to children.
2. conveys discomfort and may believe that inclusion of LGBT content can negatively “influence” students.
3. sees value in the concept and is willing to work toward greater inclusion, but has done little to date.
4. has prioritized inclusion as part of a larger commitment to social justice and is willing to commit staff and classroom time to it.

G. BOOKS AND CURRICULAR MATERIALS THAT INCLUDE POSITIVE IMAGES OF LGBT PEOPLE

1. are deliberately kept from classrooms and libraries.
2. are not present in classrooms or libraries, though those with incidental references or sub-plots are neither banned nor encouraged.
3. can be found in classrooms and libraries in moderate quantity and variety.
4. are sought out, prominently displayed and made available to all staff and students.

H. WITH REGARD TO LGBT-THEMED BOOKS AND RESOURCES, SCHOOL LIBRARIANS

1. do not solicit resources and offer no assistance to requests for related materials.
2. may have some resources in reference sections, but limit access to materials.
3. make materials accessible and comfortably direct students/staff upon request.
4. prominently display materials, provide open and confidential access to students of all ages, and actively engage colleagues by referring appropriate materials to them.

I. WITHIN THE CURRICULUM, LGBT TOPICS CAN BE FOUND

1. only in the areas of health and sexuality, where they are characterized as “sickness or sin.”
2. only in the areas of health and sexuality, where mention is cursory, neutral and clinical.
3. in history and English as well as health and sexuality classes, where the message is one of respect and equal treatment for all people.
4. integrated into all subject areas and across all grade levels as part of a consistent commitment to social justice issues, including race and gender.

J. EFFORTS TO INCLUDE LGBT THEMES IN SCHOOL CURRICULA

1. never occur and would be met with open hostility and opposition.
2. infrequently occur, are met with caution, and teachers are encouraged to stick to the standard curriculum.
3. are consistently undertaken by a small group of teachers, and received with tolerance by the larger staff, though they may not see how “it fits in.”
4. are expected and undertaken by the whole staff, who openly share materials/ideas.

K. WITH REGARD TO STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING, LGBT ISSUES

1. are never discussed and are considered an inappropriate topic.
2. may come up occasionally, with mixed reactions of support and hesitancy.
3. are incorporated periodically or in optional sessions, where staff members are generally receptive.
4. appear as a regular theme, are interwoven with explorations of race, class, gender, etc., and openly received by staff who integrate new learning into daily practice.

L. BY THE TIME STUDENTS GRADUATE FROM THE SCHOOL

1. they have had no positive curricular exposure to LGBT people, history or issues.
2. they have had sporadic and inconsistent curricular exposure to LGBT people, history or issues.
3. they have had considerable curricular exposure to LGBT topics and understand the importance of respecting all people regardless of sexual orientation/gender identity.
4. they have a depth of understanding and appreciation for LGBT people and history, and feel a sense of responsibility to combat all forms of oppression in their communities, including anti-gay bias.

M. ATHLETIC TEAMS AND PROGRAMS

1. are not safe spaces for LGBT students/staff to be open about their sexual orientation/gender identity; anti-gay epithets are frequently used by athletes and coaches alike.
2. are not spaces where LGBT students/staff feel comfortable being open; anti-gay epithets are commonly used—adults will occasionally interrupt name-calling, but generally have a “boys will be boys” attitude.
3. are generally safe spaces for LGBT students/staff, though few are open; anti-gay epithets are sometimes used—adults do not just interrupt name-calling, but educate students around the destructive effects of bias.
4. are safe spaces in which LGBT students/staff are visible and where status of an individual or team is unrelated to gender or sexual orientation; anti-gay epithets are infrequently heard—adults follow with swift and decisive action, and fellow students rally supportively around their LGBT schoolmates.

N. GAY-Straight ALLIANCES AND OTHER LGBT THEMED CLUBS

1. are strongly discouraged and non-existent.
2. are not “outlawed,” but appear infrequently due to the discomfort staff and students feel sponsoring and attending them.
3. are accepted by the school community and are usually attended by a small, but core group of students/staff.
4. are considered as valid and valuable as any other club and are consistently attended by both LGBT and straight students/staff.

O. SCHOOL-WIDE ASSEMBLIES/PROGRAMMING AROUND MULTICULTURAL/DIVERSITY THEMES

1. tend to be superficial celebrations and are completely exclusive of LGBT people and issues.
2. focus on racial/ethnic heritage; LGBT themes are seen as irrelevant/inappropriate.
3. occasionally include LGBT themes, which are regarded as relevant and important.
4. consistently include LGBT themes in integrated ways that move beyond simple acknowledgments of events such as LGBT History and Pride months.

P. WITH REGARD TO SEXUAL ORIENTATION/GENDER IDENTITY, HEALTH AND GUIDANCE PROFESSIONALS

1. offer no information or support, and are disapproving and/or ill equipped to respond to questions/problems that arise.
2. may have general information/literature (which may not be accessible), and respond to questions/problems with a mixture of compassion and discomfort.
3. have received related training, make information available, and offer compassionate and confidential support to students/families.
4. receive regular training, make information visible/accessible, provide ongoing educational programs, and offer competent and judgment-free support.

Q. COLLEGE AND CAREER COUNSELORS

1. consider LGBT issues irrelevant or inappropriate to their work and offer no related information to students.
2. do not take into account the needs of LGBT students, but may seek related information/literature in response to individual requests.
3. regularly include information about LGBT friendly workplaces/schools in resource materials, and can competently address the needs of LGBT students.
4. regularly include LGBT information in resource materials and invite representatives in to conduct informational and networking sessions for LGBT youth.

R. SCHOOL DANCES, PROMS AND OTHER SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

1. reinforce traditional heterosexual coupling as the societal norm; non-traditional relationships amongst students, staff or other adult chaperones are invisible.
2. reinforce heterosexual coupling; there is an awareness that LGBT people and relationships may exist, but they are whispered about and not visibly reflected.

3. visibly include non-heterosexual relationships (though not every day or without a few raised eyebrows); students and staff accept the existence of same-sex couples.
4. visibly include same-sex couples, who are viewed as equal to others; students feel comfortable socializing with the full spectrum of groups/couples at such events.

S. PARENT/FAMILY EDUCATION AROUND SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

1. is non-existent and there is no outreach to external agencies that provide information or support around these issues.
2. is limited to health related pamphlets and referrals to outside agencies when crises arise.
3. includes accessible literature and occasional programs/workshops delivered by staff who feel comfortable offering support and referrals.
4. is regularly provided by trained staff members as well as outside specialists; a staff member exists who is responsible for ensuring that LGBT issues are addressed through school programming.

T. THE GENERAL ATTITUDE OF ADULTS IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY TOWARD LGBT PEOPLE

1. is one of hate or pity—LGBT people are generally understood to be sick or deviant.
2. is one of discomfort—LGBT people are perceived as unhappy and unhealthy.
3. is one of respect for the differences they embody and sympathy for the challenges that they face.
4. is one of acceptance and appreciation for the perspectives and contributions they make to society.

U. THE GENERAL ATTITUDE OF STUDENTS IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY TOWARD LGBT PEOPLE

5. is one of hate or pity—LGBT people are generally understood to be sick or deviant.
6. is one of discomfort—LGBT people are perceived as unhappy and unhealthy.
7. is one of respect for the differences they embody and sympathy for the challenges that they face.
8. is one of acceptance and appreciation for the perspectives and contributions they make to society.

V. WITHIN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY, IT IS GENERALLY BELIEVED THAT LGBT PEOPLE

1. do not exist within the school community and that upholding “traditional moral standards” will protect students from the “undue influences of homosexuals.”
2. may exist within the school community and that their presence is tolerable as long as they remain invisible and do not interfere with “traditional family values.”
3. exist in the world and must therefore be proportionately reflected in the school community and treated with the same respect as all others.
4. are essential members of a diverse community who deserve an equal voice and presence within the school.

W. LGBT STUDENTS AND STAFF AND LGBT-HEADED FAMILIES ARE

1. completely invisible, feel unsafe being open about their sexual orientation/gender identity, and have no support resources available to them within the school community.
2. virtually invisible and exist within a “don’t ask, don’t tell” environment in which they feel uncomfortable discussing their sexual orientation/gender identity.
3. moderately visible, feel safe being open, and have some support resources within the school community.
4. visible and fully integrated into school life, feel safe and affirmed, and have ample human and material resources within the school.

X. HETEROSEXIST AND ANTI-GAY LANGUAGE AND BEHAVIOR BY STAFF AND/OR STUDENTS IS

1. rampant throughout the school both in and out of the classroom.
2. common in settings such as locker rooms, hallways, and the schoolyard, but generally understood to be unacceptable in the classroom or within earshot of adults.
3. sometimes heard in the hallways and schoolyard, but there are few instances of intentional harassment against LGBT or gender nonconforming students.
4. uncommon; respectful, inclusive language is consistently heard in classroom instruction and discussions.

Y. WHEN ANTI-GAY HARASSMENT OCCURS,

1. interventions by staff are inconsistent, there are few consequences for offenders, and victims may be told that nothing can be done or that they need to change.
2. staff will intervene to stop verbal and physical abuse, but handle anti-gay harassment like any other type of generic misconduct (as opposed to the serious treatment afforded sexual or racial harassment).
3. adults will intervene decisively to discipline/counsel offenders and provide support to the victims.
4. students rally around their LGBT peers and adults are quick to intervene with consequences, victim support, and proactive education to prevent future incidents.

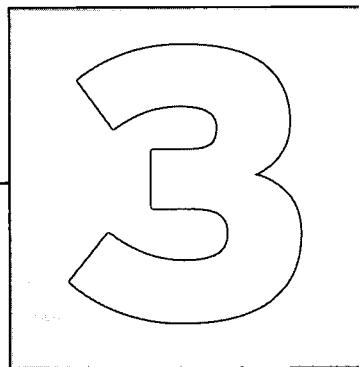
Z. WITH REGARD TO THE LARGER LGBT COMMUNITY EXTERNAL TO THE SCHOOL,

1. there is no relationship on any level and LGBT organizations and service agencies are unwelcome to participate in school activities.
2. a general concern for traditional moral values prevents relationships, though meetings with local groups or agencies may occur when crises arise.
3. there is an openness to working with organizations and service providers toward staff trainings and practices that will result in a safer school climate for LGBT youth.
4. ongoing relationships exist that bring support services, educational trainings, new staff/students, and cultural enrichment to the school community.

Scoring Guide

Enter your scores from the Assessment Survey in order to determine where your school stands in each area.

ITEM	SCORE	SECTION SUBTOTAL	SECTION SCORING	SECTION DESCRIPTION
A		Policy:	5-7 = Hostile School	A. Nondiscrimination/anti-harassment policies
B			8-12 = Resistant School	B. Multicultural/diversity statements
C			13-17 = Open School	C. Curricular policy
D			18-20 = Inclusive School	D. GSAs and LGBT themed student clubs
E				E. Staffing policies
F		Curricular Programming	7-10 = Hostile School	F. Attitude of adult community
G			11-17 = Resistant School	G. Inclusive books and curricular materials
H			18-24 = Open School	H. School librarian practices
I			25-28 = Inclusive School	I. Curricular inclusion of LGBT themes
J				J. Response to efforts to create inclusive curricula
K				K. Staff development/training around LGBT issues
L				L. Exposure to LGBT themes by graduation
M		Extracurricular Programming:	7-10 = Hostile School	M. Atmosphere in athletic programs
N			11-17 = Resistant School	N. GSAs and LGBT themed student clubs
O			18-24 = Open School	O. School-wide programming around diversity
P			25-28 = Inclusive School	P. Health/guidance professional practices
Q				Q. College/career counselor practices
R				R. Atmosphere at dances/proms and social functions
S				S. Parent/family education
T		Practice:	7-10 = Hostile School	T. General adult attitude toward LGBT people
U			11-17 = Resistant School	U. General student attitude toward LGBT people
V			18-24 = Open School	V. Beliefs about existence of LGBT people in school
W			25-28 = Inclusive School	W. Visibility/comfort level of LGBT students/staff/families
X				X. Heterosexist/anti-gay language
Y				Y. Response to anti-gay harassment
Z				Z. Relationship to LGBT community external to school
TOTAL:		Overall:	26-39 = Hostile School 40-65 = Resistant School 66-91 = Open School 92-104 = Inclusive School	



Describing Your School

Pages 32-35 contain descriptive data on schools and LGBT issues in the key areas of policy, programming and practice. The information is organized on a four-point developmental continuum ranging from "hostile" to "inclusive" settings. Use this data to develop a deeper understanding of your assessment results and to deliver accurate and specific information to your school community.

Schools and LGBT Issues: Descriptive Data

Consult the descriptive information below to develop a fuller understanding of your survey results, particularly the areas in which your school needs to improve. The descriptions that follow are broken down by area (policy, programming, practice) and school type (hostile, resistant, open, inclusive). Use the information in this section as you would a reference guide, concentrating on the sections that shed light on your survey results. It may be too dense and encyclopedic to absorb all at once, but the information will help you to gain a concrete and practical understanding of your school that will facilitate the reporting and follow-up procedures in which you choose to engage.

POLICY

1. HOSTILE SCHOOL

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY: Non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies do not include sexual orientation and gender identity.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT: A multicultural/diversity statement or policy does not exist and, in any case, would be exclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity.

CURRICULAR POLICY: A policy is enforced that prohibits positive inclusion of LGBT issues in school life.

STUDENT CLUBS: The formation of a gay-straight alliance or other LGBT-themed extracurricular club or program is strongly discouraged.

STAFF: LGBT staff members are not formally acknowledged and receive no formal protections or benefits.

2. RESISTANT SCHOOL

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY: Non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies may include sexual orientation (though not gender identity), but there are no reporting or disciplinary procedures in place that support the inclusion of this category.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT: The multicultural and/or diversity statement/policy may include sexual orientation, but school programming does not reflect this inclusion.

CURRICULAR POLICY: Curricular inclusion of LGBT themes is considered inappropriate and does not occur.

STUDENT CLUBS: There is no official policy either supporting or excluding GSAs.

STAFF: LGBT staff are protected by an employment non-discrimination policy, but do not receive domestic partnership benefits.

3. OPEN SCHOOL

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY: Non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies are inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity, and supportive reporting and disciplinary procedures are in place; these policies are visibly posted, though not necessarily discussed and understood by students and staff.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT: The multicultural and/or diversity statement/policy is inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity, and some inclusive school programming takes place.

CURRICULAR POLICY: Curricular inclusion of LGBT themes is not disallowed, but parent notification may be required to “cover” or protect teachers/administrators.

STUDENT CLUBS: GSAs are permitted and tolerated without administrative resistance, but are not actively supported in the same manner as other extracurricular clubs.

STAFF: LGBT staff are included in non-discrimination policies, receive domestic partnership benefits and can be open and honest to peers with few repercussions.

4. INCLUSIVE SCHOOL

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY: Non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity exist; in addition to supportive reporting and disciplinary procedures, proactive and preventative education is in place so that policy is understood by students and staff.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT: Multicultural and diversity programming regularly includes LGBT people and themes.

CURRICULAR POLICY: LGBT curricular inclusion is encouraged and mandated; parent notification is not used as a protective measure—communication with family is encouraged.

STUDENT CLUBS: GSAs and other clubs are actively encouraged and viewed as a necessary component of an inclusive extracurricular atmosphere.

STAFF: LGBT staff receive domestic partnership benefits, are included in outreach/hiring practices, and benefit from an official statement protecting and affirming their right to be open and honest to colleagues and students. In addition, the staff development policy/plan includes training around LGBT issues as part of a larger commitment to diversity.

CURRICULAR PROGRAMMING

1. HOSTILE SCHOOL

ADULT ATTITUDE: The adult community is strongly opposed to inclusion of LGBT topics and believes that exposure to LGBT people/issues poses a danger to children.

BOOKS/MATERIALS: Books and other curricular materials that include positive images of LGBT people/themes are deliberately kept from classrooms and libraries. Librarians do not solicit resources with any LGBT content and offer no assistance to individual requests for related materials.

CURRICULUM: Health, sexuality education and other curriculum areas characterize homosexuality as a sickness, as dangerous, and as generally undesirable.

RESPONSE: Attempts by individuals to include LGBT themes are met with open hostility and opposition.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT: Staff development/training is completely exclusive of issues around sexual orientation and gender identity.

STUDENT EXPOSURE: Students move from grade to grade with no positive curricular exposure to LGBT people, history or issues.

2. RESISTANT SCHOOL

ADULT ATTITUDE: The adult community conveys discomfort around LGBT issues and may believe that inclusion of LGBT content can negatively “influence” students.

BOOKS/MATERIALS: Books and materials that deal directly with LGBT themes are not present in classrooms or libraries, but those that may include incidental references or sub-plots are neither banned nor encouraged. Librarians may keep books with LGBT content in special reference sections and prevent free and private access to these materials, especially amongst younger children.

CURRICULUM: References to homosexuality are segregated within the areas of health and sexuality education, where mention is cursory, neutral, and likely clinical.

RESPONSE: Attempts by individuals to include LGBT themes are met with caution, and teachers are encouraged to stick to the standard curriculum.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT: Sexual orientation and gender may come up during the occasional staff diversity training; mixed reactions of support and hesitancy result in no whole school action or movement toward inclusive curriculum.

STUDENT EXPOSURE: Student exposure to LGBT people, history and issues is sporadic and inconsistent.

3. OPEN SCHOOL

ADULT ATTITUDE: The adult community sees value in the concept of LGBT inclusion and is willing to work toward greater inclusion, though they have done little to date and may not be sure how best to achieve inclusion.

BOOKS/MATERIALS: A variety of books and materials that depict LGBT images and themes can be found in classrooms and libraries; teachers, librarians and support staff feel comfortable directing students to these materials, but a concerted effort to incorporate them into daily curricula and programming is not quite in place. Librarians may make LGBT-themed literature available upon request, but do not prominently display such materials on a regular basis.

CURRICULUM: In addition to health and sexuality education, explorations of LGBT people, events and themes find their way into the history and English programs as well as current events discussions. LGBT History and Pride months may also be acknowledged

in class discussions, school assemblies and other programming. The overwhelming message is one of respect and equal treatment for all people.

RESPONSE: A small group of staff members consistently work to include LGBT themes in curriculum and to communicate their efforts to the larger community; most staff members are open and tolerant, but don't see it as "their issue" and may not see why and how this fits into daily curriculum.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT: Staff development around LGBT issues is supported by school staff and administration, and may be incorporated into faculty trainings once each school year or included as optional trainings. Staff members are receptive to these trainings, but only a small number of faculty members regularly follow-up in their classrooms.

STUDENT EXPOSURE: Over the years, students are considerably exposed to LGBT people, history and issues through classroom curriculum and discussions, and some whole-school programming. While some misconceptions and discomfort persist, most students understand the importance of respecting all people regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity.

4. INCLUSIVE SCHOOL

ADULT ATTITUDE: The adult community has prioritized LGBT inclusion as part of their larger commitment to social justice, and is willing to commit staff and classroom time to LGBT issues.

BOOKS/MATERIALS: Books and materials that are inclusive of LGBT themes and portray LGBT people in positive ways are sought out, made available to all staff/students, and prominently displayed and used in all grades and subject areas. Librarians regularly feature LGBT-themed literature in special displays, provide open and confidential access to these materials to students of all ages, and actively engage their colleagues by referencing appropriate materials to them.

CURRICULUM: Instructors strive to fully integrate LGBT themes into all subject areas as part of a consistent commitment to social justice issues, including race and gender. Discussions or lessons that incorporate LGBT content are not done as stand-alone units, implemented only during LGBT history month or isolated during other times of the year. Inclusion takes place across disciplines and emanates from a curriculum that takes into account the experiences and perspectives of the full spectrum of people in the world.

RESPONSE: All teachers and support staff are expected to be inclusive of LGBT people and issues in their instruction and programming. Open communication and sharing of ideas/materials that address gender and sexual orientation regularly takes place.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT: LGBT issues appear as a regular theme in staff development and training, and are interwoven with explorations around race, gender, class and other diversity issues. Staff members feel responsible and motivated to incorporate new learning directly into classroom instruction.

STUDENT EXPOSURE: Students emerge from their school experience with a depth of understanding and appreciation of LGBT people and history. LGBT students and those with LGBT loved ones feel affirmed and have had the opportunity to be as honest as they want to be about their sexual orientation/gender identity. All students understand their individual responsibility to combat all forms of oppression, including discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and to actively promote justice for all people in their communities.

EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAMMING

1. HOSTILE SCHOOL

ATHLETICS: Athletic teams and programs are not gender equitable; there are fewer competitive opportunities for girls, who are expected to pursue cheerleading or other traditionally “female” activities. It is unsafe for LGBT athletes to be honest about their sexual orientation/gender identity. Anti-gay epithets are commonly used by athletes and coaches alike.

STUDENT CLUBS: GSAs and other LGBT-themed clubs/programs are strongly discouraged and non-existent. School clubs in general do not incorporate diversity themes. They tend to be very gender segregated and traditional in nature.

SCHOOL-WIDE PROGRAMMING: School assemblies and special programming are completely exclusive of LGBT people and issues. Celebrations and cultural programs tend to be traditional and Euro-centric, such as a Thanksgiving Day feast or a Columbus Day assembly. Multicultural/diversity themes are treated superficially and are segregated within certain times of the year, such as a Martin Luther King assembly in January or an essay contest about important women in history during March.

HEALTH & GUIDANCE: School health, guidance and other counseling services offer no information or support around sexual orientation/gender identity. When related physical or mental health questions or problems arise, staff are disapproving and/or ill equipped to respond, and students are left to their own devices to deal with any issues they may have. The needs of LGBT students are not taken into consideration by college and career counselors, who offer no related information and view the issue as irrelevant or inappropriate.

SOCIAL EVENTS: Activities that highlight social relationships and dating, such as school dances, proms and homecoming events, reinforce traditional heterosexual coupling. If prom/homecoming “royalty” are elected, the categories are gender-binary (“king” and “queen”) and the winners tend to reflect conventional notions of beauty and popularity (e.g. the football captain and head cheerleader). Non-heterosexual relationships amongst students, staff or other adult chaperones are invisible.

- School policies do not protect the rights of LGBT people
- Curricula/materials are devoid of LGBT themes
- Organized and vocal opposition to any LGBT inclusion exists; homosexuality is characterized as “sickness and sin”
- LGBT-themed clubs are non-existent and strongly discouraged
- Athletic programs are unwelcome spaces for LGBT or gender-nonconforming students
- Health and guidance support for LGBT students/families is non-existent
- Anti-gay language/harassment is rampant
- LGBT people are invisible and feel unsafe being open about their sexual orientation/gender identity

THE HOSTILE SCHOOL

THE RESISTANT SCHOOL

- Non-discrimination policies may include sexual orientation
- Curricular inclusion of LGBT issues is limited to clinical references in health/sex ed classes
- Access to books/materials with LGBT content is limited
- Adults feel discomfort--may feel there is “danger” in exposure to LGBT people/issues
- LGBT-themed clubs appear infrequently; students feel unsafe attending
- Athletic programs are moving toward gender equity, but anti-gay attitudes remain an issue
- Health/guidance staff show compassion, but information/support is not generally accessible
- Anti-gay language is common in hallways, locker rooms, school yard, etc., though not in classrooms
- A “don’t ask, don’t tell” atmosphere exists for LGBT people

A DEVELOPMENTAL CONTINUUM

- Non-discrimination policies are inclusive of sexual orientation and students are made aware of this
- LGBT themes are occasionally included in English, history and health classes
- A variety of books/materials with LGBT content are available
- Adult community is open to LGBT inclusion, but may not be sure how to achieve it
- LGBT-themed clubs are tolerated and attended by a core group of people
- Coaches interrupt anti-gay behavior; LGBT athletes are relatively safe, though not very visible
- Health/guidance staff have had training on LGBT issues and offer information/capable support
- There are few instances of intentional harassment against LGBT students
- LGBT people are moderately visible; they may be seen as "different," but a safe and respectful atmosphere exists

THE OPEN SCHOOL

THE INCLUSIVE SCHOOL

- School policy both protects and affirms LGBT people; proactive education about such policies exists
- LGBT themes are fully integrated into curricula across a variety of subject areas and grade levels
- Books/materials with LGBT content are visible and available to all students/staff
- Adult community has prioritized LGBT inclusion as a part of a larger commitment to social justice
- LGBT-themed clubs are visible, regularly attended, and considered as valid as other clubs
- Education around anti-gay bias is a part of athletic programming; LGBT athletes are treated as equals on the playing field
- Health/guidance staff work with outside agencies to provide outreach, support and education to LGBT people
- Anti-gay language/behavior is rare and is dealt with swiftly and decisively; anti-bias education that embraces respectful, inclusive language is common in classrooms
- LGBT people are visible and fully integrated into school life; there is a high degree of comfort and acceptance regarding LGBT people

OUTREACH & EDUCATION: Parent/family education around sexual orientation and gender identity is non-existent. There is no outreach to external agencies that provide information or support around these issues. LGBT issues are viewed only within the sexual realm and are deemed inappropriate for school, especially if an abstinence-only approach to sexuality education exists.

2. RESISTANT SCHOOL

ATHLETICS: The school is working toward gender equity in athletic programming, including increased access to competitive opportunities for girls. LGBT athletes and coaches do not feel comfortable being honest about their sexual orientation/gender identity; worries about the locker room and ostracism are very real. Anti-gay epithets are common amongst athletes; coaches will occasionally interrupt this type of name-calling when it gets out of hand, but generally have a “boys will be boys” attitude and don’t see it as a major problem.

STUDENT CLUBS: GSAs and other LGBT-themed clubs/programs are not “outlawed,” but appear infrequently and only when particularly passionate individuals press for it. It is difficult to find faculty advisers willing to openly sponsor such clubs, and groups of students who feel comfortable attending. Such clubs therefore come and go in an inconsistent fashion from year to year and have a limited presence within the larger school community.

SCHOOL-WIDE PROGRAMMING: The school declares a commitment to diversity, and strives to incorporate this theme regularly into special programming. There is a hesitancy, however, to include LGBT people and topics in school-wide assemblies/programs. Most staff/students see multiculturalism as a celebration of different racial and ethnic traditions, and don’t view LGBT themes as an appropriate part of this. LGBT issues are viewed as a health/sexuality topic and are deemed inappropriate for whole school programming.

HEALTH & GUIDANCE: School health and guidance professionals may have literature or general information that includes references to sexual orientation and HIV education, but such materials are not necessarily visible or readily available. When counselors are approached with related problems, they display a mixture of compassion and discomfort; they may deal with basic questions, but will direct students to seek support from outside agencies or family members with more serious issues. It does not generally occur to college or career counselors to take into account the needs of LGBT students, but they may seek related information/literature in response to individual requests.

SOCIAL EVENTS: School dances, proms and other social functions reinforce heterosexual coupling as the societal norm. Students and staff may see traditional practices such as electing homecoming kings and queens as old-fashioned, but where such practices exist

they still enjoy status amongst the school community. There may be an awareness that LGBT people and relationships exist amongst students/staff, but they tend to be whispered about and are not visibly reflected at official school events.

OUTREACH & EDUCATION: There is no formal education for parents/families around sexual orientation or gender identity, though health pamphlets or sexuality related literature that address LGBT issues may be available. Support staff exists who may be able to provide information and referrals to outside agencies for students/families who are in crisis.

3. OPEN SCHOOL

ATHLETICS: There is reasonable gender equity in athletic teams and programs; girls' teams are taken seriously and have status within the school community. Though it is still uncommon, an occasional LGBT athlete or coach decides to come out. The reaction is generally one of support and respect, though whispering and name-calling is still a regular occurrence. When this happens, coaches and instructors are committed to not just interrupting the negative behavior, but to educating students around the destructive effects of bias. A relatively safe climate exists for LGBT athletes and coaches.

STUDENT CLUBS: GSAs and other LGBT-themed clubs/programs are tolerated with little resistance from administrators. There is a small, but core group of students and faculty who regularly participate in such clubs. Participants generally feel safe and open about their participation, though negative reactions from others are an occasional problem. There is a steady presence of GSA and LGBT extracurricular activity in the school, though one couldn't characterize such programs as encouraged by the larger school community.

SCHOOL-WIDE PROGRAMMING: LGBT topics and issues are seen to fit within diversity and multicultural programming, and steps are taken to include these themes in school assemblies and events. There may be a lack of certainty amongst some students/faculty as to the most appropriate way to handle LGBT topics, but most are open to incorporating them. There may be acknowledgements of LGBT History and Pride months during school assemblies or on bulletin board displays. Guest speakers may occasionally be invited in or videos may be screened that explore LGBT history, people and events.

HEALTH & GUIDANCE: School health and guidance professionals have received training around sexual orientation/gender identity, and make related information and literature easily accessible to students who need it. When counselors are approached with related questions or problems, they offer compassionate and confidential support, and are able to refer students to outside agencies when appropriate. College and career counselors regularly include information about LGBT friendly workplaces and schools in bulletins and resource materials, and can competently address the needs of LGBT students.

SOCIAL EVENTS: Students and staff acknowledge the existence of non-heterosexual relationships within the school community, and expect to see non-traditional couples at school social functions. Though it is not a daily occurrence, same-sex couples may be a visible part of school dances and proms, and LGBT chaperones may be accompanied by their partners without expressions of disapproval. If the election of homecoming kings/queens or other traditional practices exist, it is likely that the nominees include a broad range of students that reflect different sexual orientations and modes of gender expression.

OUTREACH & EDUCATION: Gender identity and sexual orientation are included in educational programming and literature for parents/families. School staff and support personnel feel comfortable offering support to students/families who have questions in this area. Outside agencies that offer support services for LGBT youth are regularly included in referrals. Students are aware that there are faculty members to whom they can turn for support around LGBT issues, and feel comfortable approaching these adults.

4. INCLUSIVE SCHOOL

ATHLETICS: There is full gender equity in athletic programming; co-ed and single-sex teams coexist in a non-hierarchical fashion. There is no social stigma attached to girls who participate in sports or boys who choose not to. It is safe and comfortable for LGBT athletes and coaches to be honest about their sexual orientation/gender identity. Students and staff view out athletes as equals on the playing field and admire the courage it took for them to be open. Coaches and instructors proactively incorporate education around anti-gay bias into their work. Where anti-gay name-calling or harassment occurs, adults in the school community take swift and decisive action, and fellow students rally supportively around their LGBT schoolmates.

STUDENT CLUBS: GSAs and LGBT-themed clubs are encouraged and celebrated as part of the school's commitment to a diverse atmosphere. Straight as well as LGBT students and staff see the importance of being involved in such activities, and feel free to do so without fear of being labeled "gay" or stigmatized in some other way. GSAs and related clubs do not have to focus on safety and support because LGBT people are accepted by the school community; activity is focused on heritage and community action instead. GSAs can work collaboratively with other clubs and in the community. They are considered as valid and valuable as any other club—from bible studies to basketball—and there is significant and consistent student involvement in these groups.

SCHOOL-WIDE PROGRAMMING: LGBT topics are consistently and prominently featured in school-wide programming. In addition to more segregated activities, such as History or Pride month celebrations, LGBT themes are integrated thoughtfully and naturally into school events. The latest school play may explore LGBT themes, an assembly or memorial event may be organized for the victim of an anti-gay attack, and the school band may include a tribute to an LGBT composer. Such events are received openly by students and staff, and do not cause discomfort or controversy.

HEALTH & GUIDANCE: School health and guidance professionals receive regular training around sexual orientation/gender identity and visibly display related literature so that students and families have easy access to important information. Health professionals from within the school and from outside agencies offer ongoing workshops and programs for students, staff and families around LGBT and HIV issues. When they are approached with individual concerns, they have the resources to respond with competence and without judgment. In addition to regularly including information about LGBT friendly workplaces and schools in resource materials, college and career counselors establish relationships with representatives from these institutions and invite them in to conduct informational and networking sessions for LGBT youth.

SOCIAL EVENTS: People recognize that not all couples are heterosexual. Students and staff view LGBT relationships as equal to other relationships and feel comfortable socializing with the full spectrum of groups and couples at dances and other school events. The school questions the existence of practices, such as the election of homecoming kings and queens, that traditionally make certain groups of students feel excluded or isolated. Alternative social events are regularly planned that are inclusive of the broad range of students that exist in the school community.

5. OUTREACH & EDUCATION: An active committee exists made up of family members, students and staff that discuss LGBT issues and produce needed programming and materials for the whole school community. There is a staff member who is responsible for ensuring that LGBT issues are addressed through school programming and all staff members have been trained to answer questions from students/families regarding sexual orientation and gender identity. Administrators and support staff are readily available to handle issues that other staff are not prepared to address. Outside agencies that specialize in LGBT youth issues are regularly consulted and welcomed into the school to offer presentations and other forms of support. Students feel safe and comfortable approaching most staff members for information or support concerning LGBT matters.

PRACTICE

2. HOSTILE SCHOOL

GENERAL ATTITUDE: There is a blatant rejection of homosexuality and gender nonconformance among the adult and student populations. LGBT people are generally understood to be sick or deviant, and are either hated or pitied. It is generally assumed that LGBT people do not exist within the school community and that upholding traditional moral standards will protect students from becoming LGBT themselves.

VISIBILITY & COMFORT: LGBT students and staff and LGBT-headed families are completely invisible. It would be unsafe for them to be open and honest, and there are no resources within the school community to help those who may be struggling with identity issues.

LGBT community members are secretive, guarded and fearful that others will discover their sexual orientation/gender identity.

ANTI-GAY BEHAVIOR: Heterosexist and anti-gay language are rampant throughout the school. Anti-gay epithets are regularly used in and out of the classroom. Rigid gender roles are defined and enforced. Physical harassment of those who are perceived to be gay or gender-different is common. Though blatant abuse in the classroom or hallway may be stopped, interventions by staff are inconsistent and there are few consequences for offenders. Victims of anti-gay harassment and discrimination are frequently told that nothing can be done or that *they* should change if they wish to discourage future assaults.

LGBT COMMUNITIES: There is no relationship with the LGBT communities on any level. LGBT parent and educator groups are unwelcome in the school community, and parents/staff who are active in such groups must keep their involvement a secret. Any outreach to educational organizations and service agencies is exclusive of LGBT issues. Incidents of hate-motivated violence and discrimination against LGBT people in the local community are ignored by the school. There are ties between the school and local groups that vocally oppose homosexuality.

2. RESISTANT SCHOOL

GENERAL ATTITUDE: There is a general discomfort with homosexuality and gender nonconformity amongst students and staff. LGBT people are perceived as unhappy and unhealthy, and the general consensus is that it is best if these issues are kept private. It may be acknowledged that LGBT people exist within the school community, and may even be viewed as tolerable as long as there is no “inappropriate” talk or behavior. Privilege is given to heterosexual people and families.

VISIBILITY & COMFORT: LGBT people are virtually invisible. It may be rumored that a certain staff member or parent is LGBT, but a “don’t ask, don’t tell” mentality pervades. It does not occur to the adults in the school community that there might be LGBT or questioning students; this is assumed to be an adult “problem.” It is rare that a member of the school community is honest about his/her sexual orientation/gender identity in the same manner that heterosexual people are. Those who are do not necessarily fear for their safety, but find the atmosphere to be generally unsupportive and lacking in resources.

ANTI-GAY BEHAVIOR: It is common to hear anti-gay epithets in settings such as locker rooms, hallways, and the schoolyard, but it is generally understood that this type of language is not acceptable in the classroom or within earshot of adults in the school community. Teachers and administrators will intervene to stop verbal and physical abuse, but handle anti-gay harassment no differently than any other type of generic bullying or misconduct (as opposed to the serious treatment afforded to racial or sexual harassment). Victims of harassment are likely treated with sympathy and concern for their physical safety, but they are understood to be somehow responsible for inviting or encouraging problems through

behaving in ways that contradict “natural” gender role or sexual expression. An emphasis is therefore placed on helping students to change their observable appearance or behaviors in order to better fit in with peers and encourage “normal” social development.

- **LGBT COMMUNITIES:** There is no formal relationship with LGBT groups or organizations in the larger community. Though the administration may agree to meet with local educator and parent activists, it is unlikely that any direct action will follow. There may be outreach to LGBT youth service experts when crises arise, but these efforts are isolated and not part of any broader effort to address the needs of LGBT youth. A general concern for the traditional values of the larger community prevents the establishment of meaningful relations with the LGBT communities.

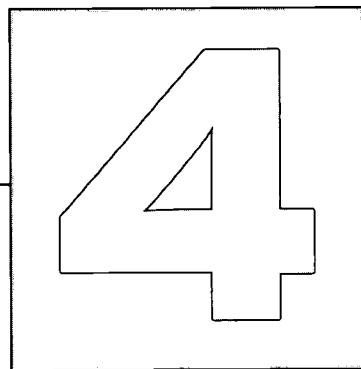
3. OPEN SCHOOL

- **GENERAL ATTITUDE:** There is an awareness that LGBT people exist in the world and must therefore be proportionately reflected in the school community as well. Students and staff generally adhere to the principle that all people deserve to be treated with respect, and that it is important to build bridges across human differences. There is an understanding of the unique challenges that LGBT youth face, and some expression of support toward those who are trying to overcome exclusion or harassment. LGBT students, staff and LGBT headed families may still be perceived as separate or “different,” though, and aren’t fully integrated into the school community.
- **VISIBILITY & COMFORT:** LGBT people are moderately visible. Most students/staff can identify an LGBT student or staff member, and are aware of LGBT-themed clubs/activities that exist within the school community. Since LGBT issues are not fully incorporated into school programming, community members have inconsistent exposure to the experiences of LGBT people and only a tangential connection to issues that may be important to LGBT people. Though there are instances of anti-gay behavior, the general climate is safe and supportive, and LGBT students feel as though there are adults and resources within the school to provide the support they need.
- **ANTI-GAY BEHAVIOR:** Though students report hearing anti-gay language in the hallways and schoolyard, there are few instances of intentional harassment against LGBT or gender nonconforming students. Traditional male/female gender roles are regarded as the norm, but there is tolerance for those who express themselves in other ways. Students and staff both believe it is unacceptable to use hate language of any sort, and most adults will intervene decisively when offenses occur. Anti-gay abuse is understood to be an especially serious problem, and there are procedures in place to discipline/counsel offenders and to provide support to the victims. There is a general commitment to address anti-gay bias through education of the general student population, but efforts are usually in response to a crisis or problem rather than proactive.

- **LGBT COMMUNITIES:** The school administration is open to working with LGBT organizations and service providers toward staff trainings and practices that will result in a safer school climate for LGBT youth. Parents and faculty members may address sexual orientation and gender issues through work on a diversity committee, or they may represent the school in their work with external groups. When incidents of hate-motivated violence and discrimination against LGBT people occur in the local community, the school is willing to speak out in support of the rights of LGBT people.

4. INCLUSIVE SCHOOL

- **GENERAL ATTITUDE:** There is a high degree of comfort and acceptance regarding LGBT people and issues. The school community views the existence of an openly LGBT population as essential to its commitment to diversity, and values the perspectives and contributions of its LGBT members. The LGBT communities are not viewed with sympathy for the struggles they must endure, but are seen as a source of strength. LGBT people are not viewed through stereotypical lenses, but are judged according to their individual strengths and weaknesses. It is perceived as “uncool” to express bias or prejudice of any kind, including bias based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- **VISIBILITY & COMFORT:** LGBT community members are visible and fully integrated into school life. Most students and staff consistently relate to someone who they know to be LGBT. LGBT-themed clubs and activities have a high profile on campus; they are considered to be worthwhile for both LGBT and straight students alike. The school atmosphere is both safe and affirming for LGBT people, and there are ample resources for those who need support or wish to become further involved in LGBT activities.
- **ANTI-GAY BEHAVIOR:** Anti-gay language and anti-gay harassment are uncommon. Respectful, inclusive language is consistently heard in classroom instruction and discussions. Both students and staff are committed to a school community that is truly respectful of human differences. Adherence to traditional gender roles is unimportant, and students feel comfortable expressing their full range of gender identities. When rare instances of anti-gay harassment arise, students rally around their LGBT peers and adults are quick to intervene. In addition to appropriate disciplinary measures for offenders and support for victims, regular and proactive education exists throughout the school aimed at preventing prejudicial thinking and behavior in the first place.
- **LGBT COMMUNITIES:** Ongoing relationships with LGBT agencies exist that provide support services, educational trainings and cultural enrichment to the school community. Parents, students and faculty work collaboratively on a committee that explores issues around sexual orientation and gender. LGBT-headed families are visible and actively involved in school projects. The school administration conducts regular outreach and recruitment efforts to ensure that the faculty and student populations are inclusive of LGBT people. When incidents of hate-motivated violence and discrimination against LGBT people occur in the local community, the school is willing to mobilize its community in support of the rights of LGBT people.



Fictionalized Composites of Schools

Pages 32-35 combine real events into narrative accounts of fictional schools. These snapshots portray realistic scenarios that can help community members to envision the school experiences of LGBT people in different settings.

THE HOSTILE SCHOOL

Situated in a suburban Midwest community, Lincoln Memorial is the town's only high school. Its 1,200 students come from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds and are predominantly white, though a growing community of Hmong residents exists.

Lincoln Memorial has no formal policy that relates to LGBT issues in a positive or negative fashion. To date, no such policy has been officially introduced or debated, though several school board members have been involved in a statewide ballot initiative to ban same-sex "civil unions" and domestic partnership benefits.

During the last school year, a female soccer coach intervened when one of her players was called "dyke" and physically shoved to the ground by a group of boys. The principal did little more than reprimand the boys, characterizing the episode as an "isolated incident" and "typical adolescent behavior." Soon after, the coach was suspended due to complaints about the "influence" she might have on her female players. These complaints followed rumors that the coach had recently divorced her husband to "enter the lesbian lifestyle." Though the rumors were never substantiated, the teacher remains barred from her coaching duties. As a result of these events, a new biology teacher made the decision to move to a neighboring town, fearing that there might be repercussions if she and her partner were seen together in the local community.

The curriculum at Lincoln Memorial is devoid of information about LGBT people or events. In a recent health class, the instructor told the class that homosexuality is a choice and that "reparative therapies" are available to help gay people who want to change. Disturbed by this characterization, a student decided to pursue more information. His search for books on gay issues in the school library came up dry and he knew he couldn't ask the librarian for help. Eventually he found a health text that included a compassionate discussion of homosexuality and checked it out. The next day his mother came across the book-marked section and immediately called the principal to protest. The book was removed from circulation the same day.

Homecoming weekend is a big event at Lincoln Memorial and the annual football game against the school's rival is the highlight. The Lincoln Lions didn't perform too well at this year's game, and spectators could hear the coach yell at the team in exasperation, "You look like a bunch of girls out there!" and "Stop playing like a bunch of fags!" No one seemed to be bothered by the coach's comments. After the game each year, a Homecoming King and Queen are elected. This year a girl considered to be "masculine" by her peers was voted Homecoming King as a joke. Devastated by the harassment, the young woman turned to a guidance counselor for help. The counselor indicated that he was sympathetic, but that she should expect as much if she insisted on dressing and behaving "like a boy." There were no consequences for the students behind the "joke."

When a local LGBT youth group heard about the Homecoming incident, the coordinator contacted the principal of Lincoln Memorial to discuss ways to prevent future anti-gay harassment. The coordinator was told that there was no problem in this area and that, in any case, the topic was inappropriate for discussion in a school setting.

THE RESISTANT SCHOOL

Ridgewood Middle School is located in a rural west coast community. Its 400 sixth through eighth graders come from predominantly working class white and Latino families.

Ridgewood recently expanded its nondiscrimination policy to include sexual orientation, but only after the threat of legal intervention. The parents of a sixth grade boy, the victim of continual anti-gay name-calling and harassment, repeatedly asked the principal to take action. When the principal did little more than warn the offenders, a local civil rights organization threatened to file a lawsuit on the family's behalf. To avoid negative publicity, the local school board quietly agreed to expand school policy. Ridgewood has no other LGBT-inclusive policy to date.

Although "homosexuality" is sometimes given a cursory mention during the sex education class that eighth graders are required to take, the general curriculum at Ridgewood does not include information about LGBT people or history. Last year a sixth grade student, working on a social studies report on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., included information about a gay civil rights leader who organized the 1963 March on Washington. Her teacher indicated that it might be best if she not share her report aloud to the class. At a later staff meeting, the teacher brought up the incident. Her colleagues agreed that she did the right thing and suggested that perhaps "sensitive" literature (like the book used for the report) be kept in a special reference section and distributed at the librarian's discretion.

A Ridgewood math teacher was recently approached for help by a seventh grade student. The boy, a regular target of anti-gay name-calling, said he couldn't stand the teasing any longer and wanted the school to do something to address the problem. Though teachers usually interrupt such name-calling, the boy pointed out, it is an ongoing problem in the locker room, cafeteria and in other places outside the earshot of adults. The math teacher promised to discuss the boy's request with the principal. When she did, the principal decided that this was an individual guidance issue and that no school-wide action was warranted. The issue was turned over to the school guidance counselor, who phoned the boy's parents and advised them to seek outside counseling in order to help their son through his "problems." The counselor offered her support if the family should need further assistance.

The math teacher who initially spoke to the boy felt that she had let him down. A lesbian herself, she understood what gay students have to endure, but did not feel comfortable pressing the issue with the principal. That weekend, the teacher attended a school dance that she had agreed to chaperone. Other staff members were there with their spouses, but she felt uneasy about bringing her partner to a school social function. During the dance, the math teacher overheard a group of girls whispering about her. They questioned why their teacher came to the dance alone and wondered if she might be a lesbian. The word "lesbian" was uttered disparagingly. The math teacher felt deafened by her own silence.

THE OPEN SCHOOL

Westside High School is located in the downtown of a medium-sized southern city. Its 1,500 students are predominantly African American and Latino, with smaller White and Asian communities. The students come from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds and speak more than a dozen languages.

During the last school year a Westside junior was assaulted in what appeared to be an anti-gay attack. The student, a young man who sometimes wears nail polish and eye make-up, reported that his assailants repeatedly called him “queer” and “fag” during the attack. Though the incident did not occur on campus, school leaders responded to community outrage by expanding Westside’s nondiscrimination policy to include sexual orientation and gender identity. Copies of the amended policy were visibly posted throughout the school.

A small group of students, disturbed by the incident, decided to form Westside’s first ever gay-straight alliance. They found a faculty adviser and got approval for the new club with little difficulty. And though some of their fliers were torn down or defaced with epithets, the students were pleased with the decent turnout at their first meeting. The GSA members decided to conduct a school climate survey as their first project. With the help of a local LGBT organization, they used the survey results to lobby the principal for a staff training around LGBT issues. Though reluctant at first, the principal eventually agreed to include a session on LGBT issues during an upcoming staff development day on diversity.

During the session, staff members listened sympathetically as the facilitators and a small panel of GSA students described their experiences with anti-gay bias in school. A couple of Westside teachers shared ways in which they create safe classrooms for all students and incorporate LGBT themes into their English and History classes. Most staff members agreed that there was a need to be more consistent about responding to anti-gay name-calling, but only a few followed up with actual classroom discussions or lessons. As a result of the meeting, the college counselor made a point of investigating gay-friendly schools and the librarian agreed to work with the GSA toward building a more inclusive collection of materials.

Several weeks after the staff meeting, one of the more visible GSA members found that “dyke” had been spray painted across her locker. Subsequently she received hostile notes in the GSA mailbox and even threatening calls at home. At her parents’ insistence, the young woman made an appointment for her family to speak with her principal and guidance counselor. Both responded with surprise and concern. The guidance counselor met on several occasions with GSA members to discuss ways to remain safe and secure while continuing their activities. The principal launched an investigation and, after a series of interviews, found out who had been placing the threatening notes and calls. The offender and his parents were summoned to the principal’s office, at which time it was decided that a suspension and regular counseling sessions were in order.

The following October, Westside High School held its first school-wide assembly acknowledging LGBT History Month. A film about LGBT history was followed by a brief discussion. Though several families protested by keeping their children home from school on that day, the program took place without incident.

THE INCLUSIVE SCHOOL

Lakeview Elementary School is located in a suburban community ten miles outside a large east coast city. Its 500 students are largely from middle class families. About half of the student population is White, one fourth is African American, and the remaining quarter is predominantly Asian.

Toward the end of the last school year, Lakeview Elementary staffed a table at the local gay pride fair in its efforts to recruit new teachers from diverse communities. Lakeview representatives discussed the school's domestic partnership benefits with potential employees, as well as its nondiscrimination and multicultural policies, which include sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. Several fair-goers applied for positions at Lakeview as a result of the table and one of the applicants was hired for a fourth grade position.

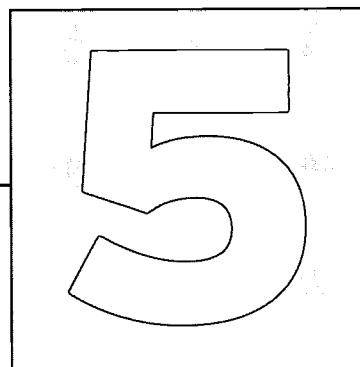
During the fall of the new school year, a staff training was conducted to explore ways to address LGBT History Month in school curricula and programming throughout October. The training was facilitated by the school's LGBT program coordinator, and faculty and parent representatives from the LGBT Issues Group. During the training it was agreed upon that LGBT History Month should be treated as a jumping off point for integrating LGBT themes throughout the year. Small groups of teachers divided by grade brainstormed ways to incorporate LGBT content into the standard curriculum and reported plans to broaden existing units including families, Native Americans, folktales, the Civil Rights Movement, and immigration.

Non-teaching staff met to discuss ways to expand their programs as well, which resulted in ideas such as library displays, new community service opportunities, and a parent information evening. In addition, plans to display an LGBT themed photo exhibit and to screen a film on gender roles were made to kick off LGBT History Month.

Unfortunately a dark shadow was cast over the planning when a Lakeview family was the target of an anti-gay attack at the end of September. A gay male couple and their daughter were watching TV one evening when a brick with a hateful note crashed through their living room window, resulting in severe cuts to the young girl.

The Lakeview community immediately rallied around the family, offering support and organizing a town meeting to discuss actions that might be taken. In response to fears expressed by other children of lesbian and gay parents, the guidance counselor organized a discussion group to help address some of their concerns. It was at this group that a third grader came up with the idea of hanging rainbow flags on all of the community homes, reasoning that the wrongdoers couldn't attack them all. Soon dozens of homes and shops around town displayed flags as a showing of support and a stand against bigotry of any kind.

A fifth grade student responded to the recent events by creating a website with a survey about LGBT issues and some resource information. When he presented his new site at a school assembly, the idea was so popular that an after school club was formed for students interested in learning how to create web pages and use the internet to get involved in community action. Lakeview's after school program already included clubs such as soccer, drama, karate and ballet—all co-ed and popular amongst both boys and girls. The new club was considered a welcome addition by staff and families alike, and a great way to impart the lessons of social justice to which the school had dedicated itself.



Improving Your School

The directions, checklists and charts on pages 38-46 will help you to turn the problems that your assessment has identified into issue campaigns that will result in real improvements for the members of your school community. There are instructions for Identifying Top Concerns, Choosing an Issue, and Developing a Strategy. The organizing strategies included here are an abbreviated adaptation of the work of Midwest Academy. For more in-depth information about direct action organizing, consult your local GLSEN Field Organizer (212-727-0135; glsen@glsen.org; www.glsen.org) or Midwest Academy (312-427-2304; mwacademy1@aol.com; www.mindspring.com/~midwestacademy/).

Identifying Top Concerns

Use information from the Scoring Guide on page 16 to focus in on your school's top areas of concern with regard to LGBT issues.

1. AREA OF CONCERN: List the average score (section total divided by the number of section items) and school designation for each of the four survey areas. Then put a check (✓) next to the section that represents the top area of concern.

TOP CONCERN check (✓) one	SECTION	AVERAGE SCORE	SCHOOL DESIGNATION <i>hostile, resistant, open, inclusive</i>
	Policy		
	Curricular Programming		
	Extracurricular Programming		
	Practice		

2. TOP PROBLEMS: For the TOP CONCERN shown above, list the score for each item and put a check (✓) next to the 3 items that represent the greatest problems for the school community. Fill in the SECTION DESCRIPTION from the Scoring Guide for the top 3 problems only.

GREATEST PROBLEMS check (✓) 3	ITEM A-Z	SCORE 1-4	SECTION DESCRIPTION <i>from column 5 of scoring guide</i>

3. CUTTING ISSUES: In community organizing, there is a difference between a problem and an issue. A problem is a broad area of concern (e.g. anti-gay name calling), while an issue is a solution or partial solution to a problem (e.g. instituting staff trainings that address name calling). Restate each of the three GREATEST PROBLEMS from above as issues. Use *Choosing an Issue* (see pages 39-41) to guide and compare your decisions, and to focus in on the issue campaign that is most beneficial to your community and winnable for your organization.

PROBLEMS	ISSUES/SOLUTIONS
	BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Choosing an Issue

Now that you have identified the problems that face your school community, you are ready to work toward solving them. The first step is to identify the issues on which you will focus. In direct action organizing, there is a difference between an issue and a problem. A problem is a broad area of concern. For example, health care, war, hunger, pollution, racism, and unemployment are all problems. An issue is a solution or partial solution to a problem. Passing pollution controls or national health insurance are examples of issues. Because direct action organizing is about winning issues, the first step is to analyze the problem and decide what kind of solution to work toward.

ANTI-GAY BIAS IN SCHOOLS: SAMPLE PROBLEMS AND ISSUES/SOLUTIONS

PROBLEMS	ISSUES/SOLUTIONS
Anti-gay name-calling and harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity Institute mandatory staff training on responding to name-calling and harassment Implement lesson plans that sensitize students to problems around anti-gay bias
No support services for LGBT youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institute training for guidance staff/service providers on LGBT issues Create a district position focused on LGBT health issues Raise/commit funds to contract outside agencies to provide services to LGBT youth
Invisibility of LGBT people/themes in curricula	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass a multicultural/diversity policy that mandates curricular inclusion of LGBT and other themes Hold staff trainings on integrating LGBT themes into curricula Adopt inclusive texts and other school materials

There are many approaches to solving any problem and the implications of each must be thought through carefully. It isn't enough to ask which is the most far-reaching solution (or for that matter, which is the most serious problem). The organizational implications of any approach must be carefully thought through as well. Consider the impact that taking up a particular issue would have on the organization and what would happen to the organization if the issue were ignored.

Checklist for Choosing an Issue

A good issue is one that matches most of these criteria. The issue should:

1. RESULT IN A REAL IMPROVEMENT IN PEOPLE'S LIVES

If you can see and feel the improvement, then you can be sure that it has actually been won. By making real improvement an explicit criterion, the organization must seek a broad consensus on what an improvement really is.

2. GIVE PEOPLE A SENSE OF THEIR OWN POWER

People should come away from the campaign feeling that the victory was won by them, not by experts or lawyers.

3. ALTER THE RELATIONS OF POWER

Building a strong organization creates a new center of power that changes the way the other side makes decisions.

4. BE WORTHWHILE

Member should feel that they are fighting for something about which they feel good, and which merits the effort.

5. BE WINNABLE

The problem must not be so large or the solution so remote that the organization is overwhelmed. The members must be able to see from the start that there is a good chance of winning, or at least that there is a good strategy for winning.

6. BE WIDELY FELT

Many people must feel that this is a real problem and must agree with the solution. It is not enough that a few people feel strongly about it.

7. BE DEEPLY FELT

People must not only agree, but also feel strongly enough to do something about it. It is not enough that many people agree about the issue but don't feel strongly.

8. BE EASY TO UNDERSTAND

It is preferable that you don't have to convince people that the problem exists, that your

solution is good, and that they want to help solve it. A good issue should not require a lengthy and difficult explanation.

9. HAVE A CLEAR TARGET

The target is the person who can give you what you want. If you can't figure out who the target is, either you don't have a good issue, or you may be addressing a problem, not an issue.

10. HAVE A CLEAR TIME FRAME THAT WORKS FOR YOU

An issue campaign has a beginning, a middle, and an end. You should have an idea of the approximate dates on which those points will fall.

11. BE NON-DIVISIVE

Avoid issues that divide your allies/supporters. Don't pit neighbor against neighbor, old against young, Black against White.

12. BUILD LEADERSHIP

The campaign should have many roles that people can play. Issue campaigns that meet most of the other criteria also build leadership if they are planned to do so.

13. SET YOUR ORGANIZATION UP FOR THE NEXT CAMPAIGN

In addition to thinking about future issue directions, consider the skills the group will develop in the campaign and the contacts it will make for the next one.

14. HAVE A POCKETBOOK ANGLE

Issues that get people money or save people money are usually widely and deeply felt.

15. RAISE MONEY

This means having some idea of how you will obtain funding sources for your campaigns.

16. BE CONSISTENT WITH YOUR VALUES AND VISION

The issues we choose to work on must reflect our values and our vision for an improved society.

Checklist for Choosing an Issue

A good issue is one that matches most of these criteria. Use this checklist to compare the issues you have identified and to determine which would be the most beneficial at this point in time.

WILL THE ISSUE...?	ISSUE 1	ISSUE 2	ISSUE 3
Result in a Real Improvement in People's Lives			
Give People a Sense of Their Own Power			
Alter the Relations of Power			
Be Worthwhile			
Be Winnable			
Be Widely Felt			
Be Deeply Felt			
Be Easy to Understand			
Have a Clear Target			
Have a Clear Time Frame that Works for You			
Be Non-Divisive			
Build Leadership			
Set Your Organization Up for the Next Campaign			
Have a Pocketbook Angle			
Raise Money			
Be Consistent with Your Values and Vision			

Developing a Strategy

Once you have focused in on a key issue, you will need a plan of action to activate your issue into a full-fledged campaign. The strategy chart is an extremely useful tool for campaign planning. It lends itself both to overall campaign strategy and to the planning of specific events such as a public hearing or an accountability session with an elected official. The chart is valuable as the focal point of a group planning process because it poses the necessary questions in a logical order and moves people through the planning process step by step.

MIDWEST ACADEMY STRATEGY CHART

***Note: The instructions that follow assume that a strategy is being developed by an established organization external to the institution being targeted for change. But whether you are a large organization or a small committee within a school, substantial change is possible. Make sure to adapt the categories and guidelines below to fit the size and nature of your group.*

COLUMN 1: GOALS

- *Long-Term Goals* are goals that you eventually hope to win, and toward which the current campaign is a step.
- *Intermediate Goals* are the goals that you hope to win in this campaign. They must be specific steps toward your long-term goals.
- *Short-Term Goals* are steps toward your intermediate goals. Short-term goals help build organizational power and sustain the organization during a long campaign through small victories along the way.

COLUMN 2: ORGANIZATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

This column is essentially an organizational expense and income statement. You list what resources you have to put into the campaign (expenses), what organizational gains you want to come out of the campaign (income), and internal problems that have to be solved.

COLUMN 3: CONSTITUENTS, ALLIES, OPPONENTS

This column is where you answer the questions, who cares about this issue, what do they stand to win or lose, what power do they have, and how are they organized?

- *Constituents and Allies* are individuals or groups of people, hopefully already organized, who you can contact and bring into the campaign. In filling out this column, be expansive, even far fetched. The

idea is to come up with a long list of potential allies. During the campaign, you may not get to all of them, but you can come back to the list later if events bog down and you need additional support.

- *Opponents* are groups, individuals and institutions that stand to lose or be very upset if you win. What will your victory cost them? Try to evaluate how actively each will oppose you, and what they will do or spend to defeat you. List the power of each opponent. How does the strength of your constituents stack up against the strength of your opponents in the eyes of the people who can give you what you want?

COLUMN 4: TARGETS

The person with the power to give you what you want is often referred to as the “target” of the campaign. The target is always a person. Even if the power to give you what you want is actually held by an institution, such as a city council or school board, personalize it. Find out the name of the person who can make the decision, or at least strongly influence it, and make that person the target. A campaign to change a person’s mind is much more believable than one to change the policy of a big institution.

- **Primary Targets:** When filling out this column, list all the possible people who can give you what you want. List the reasons that each target has to oppose you as well as to agree with you. List your power over each target. Go back to the constituency list and consider how to match the power of each constituency against the vulnerabilities of the target.
- **Secondary Targets:** These are people who have more power over the primary targets than you do. But, you have more power over them than you have over the primary targets. When you list secondary targets, write down what power you have over them, and what power they have over the primary targets.

COLUMN 5: TACTICS

Tactics are steps in carrying out your overall plan. They are the specific things that the people in column 3 can do to the people in column 4 to put pressure on them. When you list tactics, put down who will do what, and to whom. Tactics should be fun. They should be within the experience of your members, but outside the experience of your targets. Every tactic has an element of power behind it. None should be purely symbolic. Different tactics require different levels of organizational strength and sophistication to use.

TIMELINES

To finish off the planning process, make timelines for the campaign. Include all the major campaign events and deadlines for preparing the publicity for each.

Sample strategy charts are included on the following pages. There are five major strategy elements to consider, each represented by a column on the chart. At first glance it appears that the chart is a series of lists, but it is actually more like a computer spreadsheet. Whenever you change anything in one column, corresponding changes need to be made in the others. For example, adding another goal may require finding a different type of constituent group that would employ another tactic against a new target.

Midwest Academy Strategy Chart

After choosing your issue, use this chart as a guide to developing a strategy. Be specific. List all the possibilities.

GOALS	ORGANIZATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS	CONSTITUENTS, ALLIES, AND OPPONENTS	TARGETS	TACTICS
<p>1. List the long-term objectives of your campaign.</p> <p>2. State the intermediate goals for this issue campaign. What constitutes victory?</p> <p>HOW WILL THE CAMPAIGN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Win concrete improvements in people's lives? • Give people a sense of their own power? • Alter the relations of power? <p>3. What short-term or partial victories can you win as steps toward your long-term goal?</p>	<p>1. List the resources that your organization brings to the campaign. Include: money, number of staff, facilities, reputation, canvass, etc.</p> <p>What is the budget, including in-kind contributions, for this campaign?</p> <p>2. List the specific ways in which you want your organization to be strengthened by this campaign. Fill in numbers for each:</p>	<p>1. Who cares about this issue enough to join in or help the organization?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whose problem is it? • What do they gain if they win? • What risks are they taking? • What power do they have over the target? • What power do they have over them? <p>2. Who are your opponents?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will your victory cost them? • What will they do/spend to oppose you? • How strong are they? <p>3. List internal problems that have to be considered if the campaign is to succeed.</p>	<p>1. PRIMARY TARGETS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who has the power to give you what you want? • What power do you have over them? <p>2. SECONDARY TARGETS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who has power over the people with the power to give you what you want? • What power do you have over them? 	<p>1. For each target, list the tactics that each constituent group can best use to make its power felt.</p> <p>TACTICS MUST BE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In context • Flexible and creative • Directed at a specific target • Make sense to the membership • Be backed up by a specific form of power <p>TACTICS INCLUDE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media events • Actions for information and demands • Public hearings • Strikes • Voter registration and voter education • Law suits • Accountability sessions • Elections • Negotiations

Midwest Academy Strategy Chart

GOALS	ORGANIZATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS	CONSTITUENTS, ALLIES, AND OPPONENTS	TARGETS	TACTICS
LONG TERM	WHAT DO YOU HAVE?	CONSTITUENTS: INTERMEDIATE:	PRIMARY: WHAT DO YOU WANT?	50
		ALLIES: SHORT TERM:	SECONDARY: LIST ANY INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS OPPONENTS:	49

SAMPLE STRATEGY CHART: PASSING INCLUSIVE POLICY IN THE SHENENDHOWA, NY SCHOOLS

GOALS	ORGANIZATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS	CONSTITUENTS, ALLIES, AND OPPONENTS	TARGETS	TACTICS
LONG-TERM GOAL: Schools in Shenendehowa where all people are valued and respected, regardless of their sexual orientation INTERMEDIATE GOAL: Mandatory training of staff at the High School and Middle Schools SHORT-TERM GOAL: Anti-harassment and discrimination policies that include sexual orientation	WHAT WE HAVE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Field Director National Field Director Modest budget -chapter money/some regional funds Donors Media contacts Volunteers Email list Web site Mailing list Relationship with: LGBT Community Center; ESPA; GSAs; PFLAG School Climate Report Youth stories NSBA articles Will and Mom Other local policies Model policies 	CONSTITUENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LGBT victims or potential victims of harassment and discrimination in school: Shenendehowa & other area schools Families/friends of victims/potential victims Concerned teachers Anyone different who experienced or feared harassment or discrimination WHERE TO FIND THEM: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter Mailing list Membership Allied organizations: Community Center, CSS, ESPA, PFLAG GSAs/like groups 	PRIMARY: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Board Members School Board President Policy Committee/chair Principal SECONDARY: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Psychologist Counselor Student/Faculty Senate PTSA Respect Club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter to the editor; campaign in selected papers Editorial board meetings Op-eds in selected papers Influential list of endorsers Youth speak out Action Alerts: call/write the school board Press Releases/Press conference Phone calls, letters and faxes to primary and secondary targets Attend/speak at school board meetings Stickers with a universal message worn by students Involve other student groups and activities Petition drive: more signatures than School Board member votes
	WHAT WE CAN GAIN: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New members New volunteers Potential grants Potential major gifts Increased mailing list Stronger chapter board School board relationships New/stronger press contacts Higher profile/publicity Improved reputation Stronger ties to allied organizations Reputation w/elected folks in region 	ALLIES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Organizations: PFLAG, ESPA, Community Center Media: Channel 10 Union Co-chair GLSEN Cincinnati is Pres. of AFT LGBT Caucus ACLU School Psychologist Counselor 	OPPONENTS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unknown/people prone to be opposed 	PROBLEMS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board burnout Low presence in community Uncertain chapter buy-in
				51

NOTES

NOTES



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